

Town of Stratham
Town Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2010

The ballot clerks were sworn in at 7:55 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Present were Moderator Dave Emanuel, Assistant Moderator Jerry Howard, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau, Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Catherine Kenny, and Town Administrator Paul Deschaine. Also present were Selectman David Canada, and later that day, Selectman Bruno Federico. The Supervisors of the Check List present were Susan Hunter, and Caren Gallagher. The ballot clerks for the day were: Karen Cushing, Vic Collino, Nancy Hunter, Roger and Diana Thompson, Pat Sapienza, Bee Newman, Peg Mullin, Katherine McDonnell, Liz Chisholm, and Karen Ryan. Head ballot clerk Annemarie Peck was present all day.

Exeter Region Cooperative School District Ballot results for Stratham voters only are as follows: (* = Denotes the Winner)

Cooperative School Board: for Exeter for three years, vote for one: Katherine B. Miller 616*. For Brentwood for three years, vote for one: Elizabeth Faria 608*. For Kensington for three years, vote for one; (there was no candidate for Kensington, but there were 12 write in votes for Barbara Rigodeara). Cooperative School District Moderator for one year, vote for one: Charles F. Tucker 690*. Cooperative School District Budget Committee: for Exeter for three years, vote for one: Robert J. Aldrich 612*. For Newfield for three years, vote for one: Simon Heslop 602*. For Stratham for three years, vote for one: Lucy Cushman 718*.

Article 1:

Cooperative Budget: Yes 689* No 177

Article 2:

Salaries and Benefits for Administration: Yes 461* No 410

Article 3:

Salaries and Benefits for Teachers: Yes 355 No 520*

Article 4:

Special Education Trust Fund Surplus: Yes 533* No 340

Article 5:

Maintenance Trust Fund Surplus: Yes 566* No 289

Article 6

Petition of Jeffrey P. Bryan and others, for the Budget Advisory Committee to be able to have recommendation/non-recommendation on the articles for the school district warrant.
Yes 553* No 228

Article 7

The "Evergreen Clause" to restore local control in the collective bargaining and school district budget processes.
Yes 680* No 152

**Stratham Memorial School District Ballot Results are as follows:
(* = Denotes the Winner)**

School Board Member for three years, vote for one: Luke Pickett 765*. School District Moderator for three years, vote for one: Dave Emanuel 884*. School District Treasurer for three years, vote for one: John Hazekamp 817*.

**Annual Town of Stratham Ballot results are as follows:
(* = Denotes the Winner)**

It was a steady day with 969 votes cast for the Town Election, with 36 of those being absentee ballots.
The Stratham vote is as follows:

Article 1:

Selectperson for three years, vote for one: Timothy D. Copeland 518*, Lucy H. Cushman 416. Town Moderator for two years, vote for one: Dave Emanuel 840*. Supervisor of the Checklist for six years, vote for one: David Gaynor 303, Melanie McGrail 506*. Trustee of the Trust Funds for three years, vote for one: Joyce A. Rowe 559*, Mark Levine 282. Cemetery Committee for three years, vote for one: June Sawyer 821. Library Trustee for three years, vote for two: Murray Segal 313, Craig Wark 313, Gerald "Lee" Beauregard 224, Eileen Bischoff 457*. The tie vote between Mr. Segal and Mr. Wark resulted in a coin toss, with the winner being Mr. Segal. A recount was requested by Mr. Wark on March 11, 2010 which took place on March 17, 2010 with Mr. Segal being declared the winner by one vote. Final Results from the recount: Mr. Wark: 314, Mr. Segal: 315. Present at the recount was: Assistant Moderator Jerry Howard, Town Clerk Joyce Charbonneau, Selectman David Canada, Selectman Tim Copeland, Town Administrator Paul Deschaine, and the two candidates; Craig Wark, and Murray Segal. Selectman Bruno Federico arrived at the end of the recount.

Article 2:

To amend section 3.1 Establishment of Districts and add Section 3.4.15 Gateway Commercial Business District and Section 3.8 Gateway Commercial Business District.ö Yes 677* No 243

Article 3:

öTo amend Section II. Definitions, Subsection 2.1.27 Home Occupation and insert new section, Section V: Supplementary Regulations, Subsection 5.13 Home Occupations to further clarify the definition of a Home Occupation, types of allowed Home Occupations, and requirements for granting a Special Exception to allow a Home Occupation.ö Yes 698* No 223

Article 4:

öTo amend Section 3.6 Table of Uses, by deleting the current Section 3.6.A.4 and add a new Section 3.6.A.3 Multi-Family Dwelling in accordance with Section 5.8 of this ordinance and a new section 3.6.A.6 Workforce and Elderly Affordable Housing in accordance with Section 5.8 of this ordinance and renumber accordingly; delete and replace section 5.8 with a new Section 5.8 Multi-Family, Workforce Housing, and Elderly Affordable Housing; and further amend Section VIII Residential Open Space Cluster Development Section 8.1.9 Density Bonus and Section 8.4 General Requirements in conformance with the revised New Hampshire Statutes Annotated 674:58-61, and related text changes for clarification and consistency with said Statutes.ö
Yes 684* No 207

The remaining Town of Stratham warrant articles will be voted on Friday, March 12, 2010 at the Stratham Memorial School at 7:00 p.m.

Town Moderator Dave Emanuel declared the meeting to come to order at 7:10 p.m. Dave then explained the rules of procedure for Town Meeting. Following that, Lucy Cushman led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. We observed a moment of silence for all of those serving in the Armed Forces. Assistant Moderator Jerry Howard read the dedication of the Town Report to Paul Deschaine. Robert Goodrich, Stratham resident, next read the memorial dedication on Gordon Barker and Jerry Batchelder. Moderator Dave Emanuel then read the results of the ballot voting on Tuesday, March 9, 2010. Library Trustee resulted in a tie vote, in which a coin toss determined Murray Segal the winner. A recount was requested

by Craig Wark on March 11, 2010, which took place on Wednesday, March 17, 2010, with Mr. Segal being declared the winner.

The following articles were discussed and voted on:

Article 5: Budget

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate Five Million Eighty Four Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Four Dollars and no cents (\$5,084,264.00) to defray general Town charges for the ensuing year. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by a unanimous vote. Selectman David Canada moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. David Canada went through the budget and explained the items. David explained there are four articles that will affect the tax rate. Article 2, 5, 6, and 10 will add \$3.51 to the Town portion of your tax bill, which is an increase of .24 from your 2009 tax bill. For an average home in Stratham, this will add \$81.00 to your total tax bill. David further stated that a One Hundred Thousand Dollar proposal will add about .84 per thousand to your tax bill. David Emanuel then asked if there were any questions from the house. Martin Wool from Winnicutt Rd. asked why the Park budget is up \$12,000.00 from last year. David Canada explained that the \$12,000.00 would go towards an all-terrain work vehicle. This would be used to maintain trails and also for emergency use. There were no further comments or questions from the floor. Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 5 passed.

Article 6: CIP

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million One Hundred Forty Six Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$1,146,000.00) to implement the Capital Improvement Program for 2010 as presented in the Town Report and approved by the Planning Board. This is a Special Warrant Article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. Bruno reviewed the CIP and Dave Emanuel asked for questions from the floor. Bob Goodrich from Portsmouth Ave. asked about the land acquisition for cemeteries. The amounts in the CIP for 2011 through 2015 seemed large. Bruno answered that the CIP is a planning document and that the amounts in those years are not necessarily going to be used. He stated that 2010 is what was actually approved by the Planning Department, and has been looked at by the Budget Committee and the Selectmen. Esteban Rubens from Parkman

Brook Lane questioned what further improvements will be done for this year (2010) at Stevens Field. Tara Barker, the Recreation Director explained that it is hoped that the baseball field as well as the softball field will be finished this year. Last year, the fields were started, this year we need to complete the safety features as well as complete the irrigation system and start the hydro-seeding. Martin Wool from Winnicutt Rd. asked if any work would be done at the Municipal Center parking lot. David Canada answered that the work this year would consist of removing brush and small trees, and having the stumps removed from the field at the side parking lot. The softball field will stay and brush will be cut up to the softball field. Martin Wool also asked about the connection road from the Stratham Municipal parking lot to the Police parking lot and whether that would be done this year. David explained that would depend on the Highway Department and how busy they will be this year. Patty Lovejoy from Coach Rd. asked about the fundraising that was going on for this year. Tim Copeland responded that they are actively pursuing options and working on different fund-raising events. Also, he mentioned that Timberland has volunteered manual labor. Brad Russ from Whitaker Dr. also explained that \$4500.00 has been raised to date from a number of activities that have been held in the last year. Their goal is \$75,000.00 that also includes donated services. Martin Wool from Winnicutt Rd. asked how much is left over from last year's CIP and will any of those funds be used for this year. Tim Copeland explained that \$12000.00 was carried over from phase I to phase II for the fields. It will be used to add an emergency access road. There were no further questions or comments from the floor. Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question. The vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 6 passed.

Article 7: Defibrillators/Cardiac Monitors

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Eight Thousand dollars and no cents (\$38,000.00) for the purpose of purchasing two (2) defibrillators/cardiac monitors for the use of the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department, and to further authorize the withdrawal of Thirty Eight Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$38,000.00) from the Stratham Fire Department EMS Special Revenue Fund created for these purposes during the March 17, 2000 Annual Town Meeting and as amended during the March 11, 2005 Town Meeting. This is a Special Warrant Article, which will be non-lapsing until this purpose is accomplished but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). No additional funds from general taxation are to be used. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman David Canada seconded the motion. Tim Copeland went through the Article and explained the motion. With no

questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 7 passed.

Article 8 : EMS Training

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and no cents (\$8500.00) for the purpose of providing EMS training for the members of the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department for the ensuing year, and to further authorize the withdrawal of Eight Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and no cents (\$8500.00) from the Stratham Fire Department EMS Special Revenue Fund created for these purposes during the March 17, 2000 Annual Town Meeting as amended during the March 11, 2005 Town Meeting. No additional funds from general taxation are to be used. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Tim Copeland went through the Article and explained the motion. With no questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 8 passed.

Article 9: Clarifying the Authority of the Selectmen over the Public Works Commission & to Make Bylaws Regulating Municipal Utility Systems

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to prescribe the powers and duties of the Board of Public Works Commissioners established under the authority of RSA 38-C and Article 19 of the 2005 Town Warrant (incorporating and ratifying Article 14 of the 1996 Town Warrant) and also authorize the Board of Selectmen to adopt ordinances and bylaws with respect to a municipal water system, a municipal sewer system, and/or a municipal storm water system. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. The Public Works Commission also supports this Article. Selectman David Canada moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. David Canada spoke to the motion along with John Boisvert of the Public Works Commission. David Canada and John Boisvert reviewed the motion, and Moderator Dave Emanuel asked for questions or comments from the floor. David Moriarty from Winnicutt Rd. asked to clarify if this motion was about putting Town sewerage in. He also asked about the cost, and David Canada explained that the costs will be paid by the users, which will be in the Commercial District only. George Miller from Crestview Terrace commented that he was the Chair for the Water Commission when it formed in 1996 and he was also the chairman when they made it Public Works. Mr. Miller feels the infrastructure is very important, and that the basis of all infrastructures is sewer and water. Mr. Miller supports this Article. Patrick Abrami from

Tall Pines commented about how Stratham is a nice, small, rural community, and that public water and sewer will change the Town. He feels that this will open the door to a different town from what we have now. David Canada responded that this is only for the Commercial District, and the Commercial District will not be expanded. It will just intensify the use, but not increase it. With no other questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 9 passed.

Article 10: Water Studies

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$40,000.00) for the purpose of conducting further studies of the water resources, waste water, and storm water needs and related utilities to enhance the current General Commercial District. This is a Special Warrant Article, which will be non-lapsing until this purpose is accomplished but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. The Public Works Commission also supports this Article. Selectman David Canada moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. David Canada spoke to the motion along with John Boisvert of the Public Works Commission. With no questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 10 passed.

Article 11: Unitil Solar Lease

To see if the Town will ratify the long term lease agreement between the Town and Unitil Corporation, its successors and assigns for the construction and operation of a solar array and associated generation equipment on Town Property located at 4 Winnicutt Road (Tax Map 11, Lot 36.) Unitil Corporation and the Board of Selectmen have agreed to a lease of the rooftop of the Stratham Fire Department Building to site at least a 40 Kw solar array for a term of twenty (20) years, which includes easements reasonably required to implement the proposed use such as easements to provide access and utilities to the site. The lease includes other terms the Board of Selectmen deems in the best interests of the Town. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. Bruno spoke to the motion, and Dave Emanuel asked for questions and comments from the floor. John Sapienza from Raeder Dr. raised several concerns that he had, which consisted of maintenance of the roof and the panels, structural concerns on whether the panels will damage the Firehouse roof, and economic concerns on how much this will or will not save in electricity

fees. He requested that this Article be turned down. David Canada responded to John's concerns. He stated that there would be engineering studies done to ensure that the roof will not be damaged, but they have to first enter into a contract with Unitil before they spend money on further studies. The voters are only approving the lease agreement between the Town and Unitil. The Selectmen will ensure that anything that is done will be in the best interest of the Town. Paul Deschaine also spoke for the motion and explained about the new rules and legislation that makes this motion possible. He further explained that without Town Meeting vote, per State Statute, the Selectmen can only enter into a lease for one year. The residents are voting on allowing the Selectmen to enter into a twenty-year lease with Unitil. Matt O'Keefe from Portsmouth Ave. spoke for Caroline Robinson, who could not be there. He spoke for the motion, as well as stating how much work Caroline has put into this, and she is for it as well. Patty Lovejoy from Coach Rd. stated that the Exeter High School got approval for solar panels. There is a valid concern regarding the membranes on the roof, and it is still being considered on whether the roof can support the solar panels. The High School may be putting the panels on the ground rather than the roof. Mike Welty from Walter's Way explained there will be no holes in the roof at the Fire Station. He explained this system they are looking at is a non-penetrating system which will be sitting on the roof as a balance system. Janice Wayne from Depot Rd. asked to clarify what the vote means on this Article. David Canada explained that the voters will be giving the selectmen permission to enter into a twenty-year lease with Unitil. Brad Jones from Winnicutt Rd. spoke against the Article. He is a roofing contractor. Brad stated he is on the Board of Directors for the National Roofing Contract Association and has attended many seminars on solar panels. He stated they are vastly over-rated. He also stated the Firehouse roof is a single-ply membrane that is easily damaged. Martin Wool from Winnicutt Rd. stated that he agrees with Mr. Sapienza. Mr. Wool's concern is for the Fire Station, and he does not want to see the building put in a compromising position. Paul Deschaine explained that any damage done during installation would be insured by the contractor doing the installation. Jordan Ambargis from Humes Court asked if the Selectmen have the authority to stop the project from proceeding if it is determined that there is damage to the roof. David Canada explained the voters would be giving the Selectmen the authority to negotiate with Unitil. George Doran from Drumlin Dr. asked if it is standard operating procedure to approve an Article like this without the substance of engineering studies. David Canada responded that the voters have to place a certain amount of trust in the Board of Selectmen to negotiate the contract in good faith, and that they will have the best interest of the Town in mind. Lisa Hamm from Dumbarton Oaks asked what would be the financial benefit to the Town. She asked if there would be a rate reduction for the Firehouse from Unitil. Paul Deschaine stated there is no reduction from Unitil. Lisa

recommends a financial analysis during the twenty-year lease. The Board of Selectmen stated they would take that into consideration. Mr. Rubin from Parkman Brook Lane asked how long the solar panels would last. Paul Deschaine responded that the warranty period is twenty years, but it is not uncommon to get another ten to twenty years after that. Mike Welty from Walters Way also stated there would be very good productivity after twenty years and that they should still be running at eighty percent effectiveness. The Town will only be paying \$1.00 for the solar panels after twenty years, and that is a bargain with the amount of usage that the panels will have left in them. Ted Bedford from Peninsula Dr. asked how long will it take to get a formal agreement from Unitil once the Selectmen get the authority to enter into the lease. David Canada responded the earliest would be ninety days. David Canada also explained that this proposal from Unitil will not be available next year.

George Miller from Crestview Terrace explained how the utilities are run by the Public Utility Commission. Utilities only earn on the plan they have in service. Cheryl Ewart from Smith Farm Rd. commented on how grateful she is that the Selectmen are looking to save money for the Town by investigating solar panels for this year, and investigating a cell tower last year. Both ventures would save money to the Town and its residents, and for this, she is grateful. Eddy Meckel from Pinewood Dr. asked if there is a possibility of placing the solar panels on a different building. Paul Deschaine responded that they did initially explore the roof of the Municipal Center, and that did not pan out as the Municipal Center is comprised of five different additions and the roof would not support the solar panels. A newly-constructed building such as the Firehouse is the most optimal structure to put the panels on. Mike Welty from Walters Way commented on snow removal for the panels. He stated that the Town is not going to have to send anyone up on the roof of the Firehouse to remove snow from the panels. The panels will actually melt the snow. Jim Scamman from Portsmouth Ave. asked if the panels can be placed somewhere other than the roof. He also suggested that when the Community Center is built in a couple of years, why not just build it with the solar display already on top of it. With no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 11 passed.

Article 12: 300th Anniversary Committee

To see if the Town will vote to create a committee of five (5) members and up to five (5) alternates, all of whom to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen to study, investigate, organize, and prepare for the Town of Stratham's 300th Anniversary to occur in the year 2016. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. Selectman David Canada moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. David Canada spoke for the motion, and

asked if there was anyone interested in being part of this committee to please let the Selectmen know. Bob Goodrich of Portsmouth Ave. asked when is the anniversary, and David Canada responded it is in the year 2016. With no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 12 passed.

Article 13 ó Accrued Benefits Trust Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$20,000.00) to be deposited into the Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund as created by the March 16, 2007 Town Meeting to meet the currently unfunded obligations of the Town. This is a Special Warrant Article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from the appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman David Canada seconded the motion. Bruno Federico spoke for the motion. With no questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 13 passed.

Article 14 ó Change Purposes of the Land Conservation fund

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Conservation Commission to use the Land Conservation Fund to purchase, acquire, maintain, improve, and protect natural resources within the Town of Stratham pursuant to RSA 36-A. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. The Conservation Commission also supports this Article. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman David Canada seconded the motion. Tim Copeland spoke for the motion. Pat Elwell from Strawberry Lane, Chairperson for Stratham Conservation Commission also spoke for the motion. Anna Decarteret from Glengarry Dr. asked to clarify the definition of "improvement" in reference to this Article. Pat Elwell responded that the Conservation Commission is very careful about maintaining costs, and any kind of "improvement" would be discussed at great length within the Commission. Pat also invited everyone to attend these meetings, and they are held every second and fourth Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. at the Municipal Center. David Moriarty from Winnicutt Rd. asked if this Article concerns privately owned property or Town property. Pat responded that it primarily concerns Town owned property. They are looking at the Town Forest, and a piece of property down by the Squamscott River. With no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel

read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 14 Passed.

Article 15 Naming the Town Forest After Gordon Barker

To see if the Town will vote to name the Town Forest created by Article 18 of the March 11, 1994 Town Meeting as the "Gordon Barker Town Forest" in the memory of Gordon Barker who was instrumental in many ways of bettering the community, not the least of which was the acquisition of the so-called Gifford Property, which is the site of the Town Forest. This Article is intended to honor Gordon Barker's memory in recognition of his many years of service to the Town of Stratham. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. The Conservation Commission also supports this Article. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept the Article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Tim Copeland and Pat Elwell spoke for the motion. Tim stated that this gives Gordon Barker, who devoted much of his life to conservation as well as this Town, his "due honor." This will honor him as well as his memory. Pat Elwell stated that 2009 was a tough year in that the Town lost two outstanding citizens. Jerry Batchelder and Gordon Barker were long-standing members on the Conservation Commission, and were both dedicated to preserving the natural resources of the Town. Pat went on to state that Gordon was instrumental in taking action to protect the land long before it was recognized that it was an important thing to do. Gordon was also instrumental in raising awareness for the Town to purchase the Gifford property, where a portion of that land was used to build Stratham Memorial School, a portion was used to complement Stratham Hill Park, and a portion was used to complement the Town Forest. In the years that the property was purchased, thousands of people from Stratham and the surrounding communities have had the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the Forest and the Park. Martin Wool from Winnicutt Rd, requested a standing vote in honor of Gordon Barker. Having no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the standing vote was unanimous in the affirmative, and Article 15 passed.

Article 16 Vote on the definition of "Marriage"

By petition of John Polzella and 26 other registered voters of the Town of Stratham, to see if the Town will vote to approve the following resolution to be forwarded to our State Representative(s), our State Senator, the Speaker of the House, and the Senate President:
Resolved: The citizens of New Hampshire should be allowed to vote on an amendment to the New Hampshire Constitution that defines "marriage." John Polzella from River Rd. moved to accept the Article as read. Patricia Polzella from River Rd. seconded the motion. John Polzella

spoke, and wanted to make clear that they were not there to define marriage, that the purpose of this article is to request that our congressional leaders allow us to vote on an amendment to the NH Constitution that defines marriage. Moderator Dave Emanuel announced there is a petition to conduct a secret ballot on this Article. Howard Altschiller from Apple Way stated that the question on this Article is an innocent sounding question that is not innocent at all. It is a wolf in sheep's clothing. He further stated that this question only has one purpose and that is to begin the process of taking away the legal rights of same sex couples to marry. That right was granted last year by the Legislature and the Governor, and became law in January 2010. He stated he is very proud that our Stratham residents; State Representatives Doug and Stella Scamman, and Trinka Russell voted against repeal of this law. Mr. Altschiller went on to say that what will be decided tonight is largely symbolic and tells the rest of the State who we are in Stratham, and what we believe in. He stated that he believes that his neighbor has the same God-given right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as he does. He also stated that he does not think that his marriage to his wife Debra should have any more or less legal standing than anyone else's marriage, gay or straight. He opposes with all his strength anything that would create citizens for less than equal in the eyes of the law. He stated that the darkest lessons of history make clear what happens when minority groups are treated by law as less than. This law only addresses civil rights at the State level. He went on to state that today, the people slowly gaining equal rights are gays and lesbians. When he thinks about this issue, he thinks about the young black men and women in the 1960's who braved violence and hatred to walk into schools that had always been all white. When he sees those film clips today, he sees those students scared but moving forward, putting one foot in front of the other, because that is how civil rights progressed, one step at a time. Mr. Altschiller stated "Let's not take a step backward today. Let's step forward together and affirm that all men and women are created equal." He asked everyone to vote against Article 16. Trinka Russell from Dundee Circle, who is one of Stratham's State Representative's spoke against the motion, as did Carol Hazekamp from Dumbarton Oaks, Michael Perfit from Winnicutt Rd., and Esteban Rubens from Parkman Brook Lane. Karen Daniel from Winnicutt Rd. asked for a clarification from the Moderator. She asked if we can indefinitely table the petition. Moderator Dave Emanuel stated that to table the motion would supersede all other motions. Karen then made a motion to indefinitely postpone this petition. It was seconded by Pat Elwell. Karen stated that this entire vote is simply to make a statement about what Stratham thinks about it. Karen also stated that she doesn't think we want to sink to that level of voting on whether we should vote on someone's rights. Moderator Dave Emanuel then stated that the motion before the floor was to table this Article indefinitely, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 16 was tabled indefinitely.

Article 17 ó Other Business

To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Selectman David Canada thanked all the member of Boards/Commissions and Committees for their innumerable contributions throughout the year. He specifically thanked the members commitment of the Gateway Subcommittee for passage of the Gateway Commercial District Zoning Amendment after many years of hard work. He also thanked Caroline Robinson for her persistence in working on the solar project for the Fire Station. Dave also thanked Chief Robert Law, and Assistant Chief Dave Emanuel who are retiring after many years, for their dedication and hard work to the Volunteer Fire Department. Dave also mentioned that anyone interested in serving on any Board/Commission or Committee should apply by letter or application to the Board of Selectmen by Wednesday, March 31, 2010. Applications are available at the Town Offices and online at our new website: www.strathamnh.gov. Dave also welcomed the new Chief of Police; Chief John Scippa and our new Town Planner, Lincoln Daley. Dave Canada also welcomed our new Park Ranger, Kim Woods. Selectman Tim Copeland announced that the Conservation Commission will be holding their annual clean-up day on the morning of Saturday, April 24th. They will welcome all help from individual residents and groups like boy and girl scouts. When you come to Stratham Hill Park, you will be assigned an area to clean up and be given a safety vest, plastic gloves, and a trash bag. The pick up will start at 9:00 a.m. and will end around noon followed by a free barbeque at the Park for everyone who participates. Tim also thanked everyone who supported him in his recent run for Selectman. He stated that he appreciates being able to keep the job that he loves so much. Selectman Bruno Federico announced the award of a NH Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant in the amount of \$92,504.00. This will go to new windows and added insulation at the Municipal Center. Town Administrator Paul Deschaine expressed his gratitude to the Board and residents for the recognition that he received with the dedication of the Town Report. He also wanted to thank his wife, Mikki, who has supported him throughout his career and added he would not have been able to do the things that he has done without her patience and tolerance. He also wished to thank the current Board of Selectmen, as well as the past boards. He also thanked the staff members, both present and past, who have guided him, and who contributed so much on a daily basis, and to all the volunteers who he has known and worked with during the past twenty years. Selectman David Canada also announced the continuation of the Stratham Pocket Gardeners. They are a broad network of volunteers who seek to care for and maintain the current public gardens in Town. Gardens currently exist at Stratham Hill Park and the Municipal Center. He announced anyone interested in joining in on the fun can sign

up by sending an email to strathampocketgardeners@comcast.net. He also wanted to thank Melanie McGrail for volunteering to coordinate this effort. David also wanted to thank all who responded to the Town's needs during the February windstorm. He stated that our collective response demonstrated our resolve yet again during adversity with neighbor helping neighbor as a community should. He also mentioned our new website, and also wanted to thank Lesley Kimball who was instrumental in getting it up and running. Dave also asked any newly-elected Town Officers to come forward after the meeting to be sworn in. Moderator Dave Emanuel announced that his wife is expecting their second son. Dave then entertained a motion to adjourn. A motion was made and seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joyce L. Charbonneau
Town Clerk